



# Weekly Safety Meeting

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## Chemical Hazards-Chemical Spill Safety

Unplanned release of a chemical can have devastating effects. Skin and eye burns, damage to the lungs, fire and explosion, corrosive damage to materials, pollution of air, soil, and water, and danger to the public are just some of the possible consequences of a chemical spill.

Chemical spills can be in the form of liquids, solids such as pellets, gases, or vapors. They can be flammable (quick to burn or explode), corrosive (damaging to human skin or other materials), or toxic (poisonous to humans and other living creatures).

The time to deal with the chemical spill as long before it happens, by rehearsing what you will do and obtaining the supplies you will need for self-protection and clean up.

First, you need to learn all you can about the chemicals used and stored in your work area. What are the hazards? What would happen if the chemical were exposed to air, oxygen, a spark, water, or even motion? Is the chemical corrosive, cause burns to human tissue?

If breathed in, could it damage the respiratory system, cause unconsciousness or death? are there possible long-term effects from chemical exposure, such as cancer? you get this type of information from your training, the Safety Data Sheets (SDS), and container labeling.

### Procedures for Dealing with the Spill:

- Alert people in the area of the spill.
- Call the appropriate emergency numbers, which should be posted at each telephone or communication center.
- Attend to any injured persons, removing them from exposure and getting to a safety shower if necessary.
- Depending on the nature of the chemical, you may need to open windows and doors to provide ventilation, close the affected area to contain spills, and turn off heat and other ignition sources.
- If you are trained and authorized, use the appropriate materials to absorb or contain the spill. For instance, you might have kits to neutralize spilled acids or bases. For other chemicals, you could be required to sprinkle an absorbent litter or a spill or surround the spill with a dam.

### Do Not Attempt to Clean up under These Circumstances:

- You don't know what the spilled material is;
- You don't have the necessary protection or the right equipment to do the job;
- The spill is too large;

- The spill is highly toxic; or
- You feel symptoms of exposure.

Learn your part in the spill response plan for your department. If there is no such plan, ask your supervisor to work with the management and safety department to establish one.

### **Preventing Spills:**

- Eliminate clutter;
- Know proper work practices for biological, chemical materials you use;
- Use unbreakable secondary containers;
- Store chemicals properly; and
- Dispose of waste and excess chemicals in a timely manner.

***FOLLOW PROCEDURES...KEEP SAFETY IN MIND!!***

